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THE

LONGFELLOW MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION,
OF CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.



CAMBRIDGE:
WILLIAM H. WHEELER, PRINTER.
1883.



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Soon after the death of Mr. Longfellow, it occurred to some of his neighbors that it would be an appropriate tribute to his memory, if the lot opposite his house, which he had for years kept open in order that he might enjoy the view over the Charles River, could be purchased, and adorned with a permanent memorial of him.

Several meetings were held in order to consider the feasibility of such a plan, and out of these meetings grew the Association which was, at a later date, incorporated by a special act of the Legislature of Massachusetts. The object of the Association as expressed in this Act is, "to provide suitable memorials to the late Henry W. Longfellow, and to arrange for their care and preservation."

In pursuance of this object the Association has been collecting funds since that time. The actual labor of raising this money was, by the By-Laws, devolved upon the Finance Committee, which has, during the year, held many meetings, at which every phase of the subject has been discussed with fullness, and the individuals have, in addition, devoted a great deal of time to the matter outside of the meetings of the Committee.

The direct execution of the plans was placed in the hands of two Sub-Committees, a Committee on Collections, and another on Children's Subscriptions. Both of these have attended to their duties constantly through the year. The Finance Committee decided that a call should be made for a National Subscription of one dollar from each person, that being the smallest sum necessary to constitute one an Honorary Member of the Association, and although larger amounts were gladly received, the impression became so general that the call was strictly limited to gifts of one dollar, that larger sums were seldom sent to the Treasurer.

The Association found itself embarrassed at the outset by the very popularity of the proposition that it presented to the public, for two Associations were very soon formed, one of which copied our methods even in detail. These deprived us of the support of many who would otherwise have sent their subscriptions to us.

One of these was formed in England soon after our plan had been announced, for the purpose of placing a bust of the poet in Westminster Abbey. It intended also to raise large sums to endow scholarships in the different Universities of England. Some five hundred pounds were collected, and the placing of the bust in the Abbey insured; but there the movement stopped, for subscriptions did not reach the treasury in sufficient sums to make further efforts likely to prove successful.

In a similar manner, a Society was soon formed in Portland, which also adopted a name similar to our own,

and imitated our various plans for raising funds, issuing a certificate of membership, and cards for children.

Both these schemes naturally followed such a proposition as that made by this Association, and it was, of course, for many reasons desirable that the poet should be commemorated both in the place of his birth, and also in the mother-country, where his popularity was perhaps greater than that of her own greatest poet. We are glad to know that success has crowned each effort.

Notwithstanding the popularity of the plan it soon became apparent that the attempt to interest a nation of fifty millions in a memorial, even to one so much beloved as its greatest poet, was an undertaking of vast proportions for an association like our own which had no far-reaching agencies previously established. The first effort of the Committee on Collections was to give information to the public, in all parts of the Union, that the subscription was open, and that contributions would be welcomed, and as far as possible at that time to show the nature of the proposed Memorial. A list of the principal newspapers in the different states and territories was prepared (somewhat over a thousand) and to those such printed matter as was issued by the Committee was sent from time to time. The editors of these papers were exceedingly cordial towards the movement, and to their kindness a large portion of whatever success has attended the efforts of the Association is due. The spirit of these notices may be seen in that of Mr. George William Curtis, in *Harpers' Weekly*, for May 27. He said :

"No more beautiful or worthy object could be proposed to all who have felt the pure and hallowing influence of the genius of Longfellow; and if every reader of these words who has been cheered and strengthened by the poet will send a dollar to the treasurer, the pious work will have been accomplished."

Simultaneously with these efforts to give information, the Committee made arrangements to prepare a design for a Certificate of Honorary Membership, and another for the Children's Memorial Card. The Certificate of membership was drawn by a member of the Committee on Plans, and was printed with much care, on parchment paper, in order that it might be suitable for preservation. The children's card, which contains a reduced fac-simile of an autograph of one of Mr. Longfellow's poems, was prepared with care, and bore the best likeness of Mr. Longfellow that has yet been produced, and also a new and very pleasing view of his house, which was drawn for it.

Feeling that the community immediately about the home of Mr. Longfellow would be most interested in commemorating his inspiring life, the Committee prepared a circular for distribution in Cambridge, and sent it to all persons whose names could be obtained. Some nine thousand of these were sent out, each accompanied by a subscription-heading.

Afterwards a special circular, prepared by the Committee, was addressed to about twelve thousand persons in Boston and the suburbs. Circulars were also sent and letters written to the proprietors of the principal

hotels in Boston, and to the officers of the different Clubs.

At the same time circular letters were addressed to all the Senators and Members of the House of Representatives at Washington, to the Justices of the different Courts there, and to the Heads of the various Departments of the National Government. Letters were also written to the Governors of each of the States and Territories, giving an account of the proposed Memorial, and asking their co-operation. In a number of cases these officials replied very cordially, sometimes giving emphatic expression to their appreciation of the character and work of Mr. Longfellow.

The Governor of Rhode Island, after expressing his willingness and pleasure to co-operate in the work, said:—

“Among the many authors who have contributed to establish and to raise the standard of American literature, no one is entitled to a warmer place in the hearts of our people than the gifted writer whose memory you are endeavoring to preserve in so fitting a manner. The noble traits of character so conspicuous through his long career, and the example and inspiration of his spotless life, would alone entitle him to a nation’s gratitude.”

Governor Bloxham, of Florida, wrote:—

“Longfellow as a poet and a man illustrates the highest type of our civilization, and as such, I esteem it not only a matter of pride, but an act of duty we owe to ourselves and to the future of the country, to give, now that he is dead, some expression of our appreciation of his talents and virtues. The influence of his life and works upon American morals

and letters has been greater, perhaps, than we are capable of estimating at this time, and it is my wish that that influence may continue."

Gov. Bell, of New Hampshire, said:—

"We erect monuments to warriors and statesmen who have rendered service to the country, but the same honor has rarely been paid here to literary men. It is quite time that the poet should have his due. Longfellow, had he written nothing beside the 'Psalm of Life,' would have been one of the great benefactors of the people; but all his works have done honor to our national literature, have been elevating and refining in their influence, and have contributed to make the world happier and better."

The Governor of Illinois writes:—

"I regard the movement as a most worthy one. The people of this free country will fail to do their duty if they do not, without long delay, provide some lasting memorial which shall testify to future generations their high appreciation of, and affection for, Henry W. Longfellow, the Poet."

The Governor of Wyoming Territory said:—

"Every American is the richer for the legacy of so pure an example, and the fruits of a genius so lofty and noble, as were left to his countrymen by this Prince of Poets."

The next step involved sending out circulars to post-masters throughout New England, who were requested to give publicity to the movement. During the height of the summer season, circulars were sent to the proprietors of the leading summer resorts, who, in some cases, brought the subject to the attention of those in their houses, and even sent the names of their guests to the Society.

The information having thus been very generally circulated throughout the country, the Committee began

correspondence with persons in prominent places, for the purpose of forming local associations at important centres. This correspondence still continues, and has resulted in the inauguration of movements under the care of Associations or Committees, viz.: Washington, Wilmington (Del.), Baltimore, San Francisco, New Orleans, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Jacksonville (Ill.), Utica, Colorado Springs, and Fitchburg (Mass). In many other places the Committee has been able to find persons ready to interest the local public, but who did not think it necessary to organize formal associations or committees.

Circulars were sent to all the leading booksellers in the country, asking them if they would receive subscriptions. A large number of them very cordially accepted the duty, and to them circulars, posters, and subscription-headings were sent. Some of them afterwards reported members to the Association, and remitted funds to the Treasurer. In these various ways, something more than 125,000 circulars have been issued by the Association.

The summer holidays interrupted the work somewhat, because during that season the persons whom it was desirable to interest were, many of them, away from their homes. On the approach of autumn, however, work began again with energy.

The ladies of Cambridge very soon formed an Association, which divided the city into districts, and appointed agents in different localities, who visited the

citizens at their homes, and offered them the opportunity to make themselves members of the Association, or in any other way to contribute to its funds. The effort, which is still progressing, has already resulted in the addition of several hundred dollars to the Treasury.

Simultaneously with this movement, an effort was made to interest the young men and women of the Colleges in the country, and a special circular, prepared for them, was sent to more than four hundred such institutions. Comparatively few of them responded; but from several—Harvard College, Wellesley, Yale, Williams, Cornell University, and others—favorable replies were received, and the canvassing of these institutions is still in progress. The undergraduates in

✓ Harvard College have in considerable numbers become Honorary Members of the Association.

The Committee on Children's Collections came to the conclusion, in the spring, that no successful effort to interest the children of the country could be begun before the autumn; but after the summer vacation, the beautiful Children's Card, which had been prepared under its auspices, was ready to be issued, and a circular announcing the fact was printed and widely distributed.

The Superintendent of Schools in Cambridge took immediate interest in the matter, thoroughly organized the movement in his schools, and some three thousand of the children became purchasers of the Memorial Cards. At the same time the School Committee of Boston suspended the rule which forbids circulating subscription papers

among the children, and an agent of the Memorial Association was permitted to visit all the schools, which he did with success, and about ten thousand children subscribed. At the same time the interest in the children's Memorial cards became quite general throughout the country, and many teachers voluntarily interested themselves in bringing it to the attention of their pupils.

The following table shows the States and Territories from which contributions have come for children's cards, and the approximate number of cards which have been sent to them.*

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------|
| California | 280 | Minnesota | 20 |
| Canada | 10 | Nebraska | 30 |
| Colorado | 90 | New Hampshire | 110 |
| Connecticut | 180 | New Jersey | 270 |
| Dakota | 60 | New York | 1090 |
| Delaware | 250 | Nevada | 10 |
| Dist. of Columbia | 3110 | North Carolina | 30 |
| Florida | 10 | Ohio | 350 |
| Illinois | 1520 | Pennsylvania | 470 |
| Indiana | 10 | Rhode Island | 150 |
| Iowa | 90 | Tennessee | 80 |
| Kansas | 40 | Texas | 20 |
| Kentucky | 10 | Virginia | 40 |
| Maine | 130 | Washington Ter. | 10 |
| Maryland | 50 | West Virginia | 10 |
| Massachusetts | 20,010 | Wisconsin | 30 |
| Michigan | 90 | | |
| Total | | | 28,660 |

* There are at present in the hands of agents —

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| 996 Certificates | \$996 |
| 6920 Cards | 692 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$1688 |

A considerable number of these will probably yet be paid for.

The following extracts are selected from many letters written by children, accompanying their hearty gifts. A little girl from Maryland says :

" In this letter I send you one dollar, which I have earned by doing without butter for six weeks. I like Mr. Longfellow very much, and I have read a great many of his poems."

From Pennsylvania the following was received :

✓ " My little sister Annie, and I, having read in the 'St. Nicholas' about the Longfellow Memorial Association, are both anxious to contribute a small share towards the erection of a monument to the memory of our dear American poet. Please accept our contributions, and consider us willing little members of the Association."

A little boy in Cincinnati, who collected ten cent subscriptions among his classmates, writes :

" I had no trouble in getting the ten cents from each boy, as all of us boys have a very great respect for our great poet who has written so many beautiful poems. We hope that our small tribute will be some help to your work. Please send the cards, so that the boys may be sure that I sent you the money."

The agent who has visited the schools of Boston, has also undertaken to do the same service in some of the other cities in Eastern Massachusetts, and he has been cordially received wherever he has gone.

A circular addressed to children, and the other circulars, have been sent to newspapers throughout the country, followed by special items to many of them. Wherever the Association was engaged in forming a local Society, the Secretary has taken pains to send special items of information to the local editors, and

these have been printed in large numbers and widely copied. Many editors have applied directly for special information about the movement, and it has been sent them from time to time.

The formation of Auxiliary Associations has required voluminous correspondence, as the Committee has not always been able to find the proper person to take charge of a local association without much investigation. Some of the local associations have proved very vigorous. An important one was formed in Washington under the direction of the Hon. Horatio King. It included members of the Cabinet and other prominent persons of that city, who thus gave their valuable support to the movement, and set an example to other cities. In the same way Mr. Andrew C. Trippe of Baltimore interested the community, and an active association has been formed there. In San Francisco the effort to establish a local association was met with great cordiality, and the principal citizens of the place gave their support, immediately, at the suggestion of R. H. McDonald, Jr., Esq. Mrs. Geo. H. Bates of Wilmington took charge of the work in Delaware, and organized a Committee which represented its different sections. She communicated directly by letter with all of the newspapers in the state, and in other ways exerted herself in behalf of the Association.

In New York City, Mr. Edward L. Burlingame, has, at much personal sacrifice, interested a number of prominent citizens, but no actual presentation of the subject to the public has yet been made. The same is true of a

number of the other cities where associations have been formed, and the Society is under deep obligations to the residents in those places, who have, at considerable personal inconvenience, labored to make this movement a success.

Since the 16th of June, when the certificates of Honorary Membership were ready to be sent out, the Secretary has been engaged in issuing them, and up to the present time has sent out 3661 certificates, which are distributed as follows, throughout the States and Territories of the Union, and foreign lands.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------|--------------------------|-----|
| California | 20 | Missouri | 4 |
| Canada | 15 | Montana | 1 |
| Colorado | 9 | Nebraska | 1 |
| Connecticut | 49 | New Brunswick | 13 |
| Dakota | 1 | New Hampshire | 34 |
| Dist. of Columbia . . . | 84 | New Jersey | 11 |
| England | 12 | New Mexico | 2 |
| Georgia | 3 | New York | 288 |
| Germany | 2 | Nova Scotia | 2 |
| Illinois | 20 | North Carolina | 1 |
| Indiana | 1 | Ohio | 29 |
| Iowa | 6 | Pennsylvania | 54 |
| Jamaica | 1 | Rhode Island | 55 |
| Japan | 4 | So. America | 1 |
| Kansas | 4 | South Carolina | 3 |
| Kentucky | 1 | Sandwich Islands . . . | 6 |
| Louisiana | 1 | Switzerland | 1 |
| Maine | 42 | Tennessee | 2 |
| Maryland | 16 | Vermont | 3 |
| Massachusetts | 2810 | Virginia | 4 |
| Mexico | 3 | Washington Territory . | 1 |
| Michigan | 13 | Wisconsin | 12 |
| Minnesota | 9 | Wyoming Territory . | 9 |

The amount of money which has been received from Children's Certificates and from Honorary Members can be learned from the Treasurer's report.

The work of the Committee has been, it must be confessed, not entirely confined to doing honor to Mr. Longfellow, although, indirectly, all that it has done has tended in that direction. The Committees have felt that such an effort as that in which they were engaged was adapted to exert a powerful influence upon the country, educating the young to admire and venerate a pure and gentle life, and to appreciate the fact that material advancement, and the building up of fortunes, should not engross the attention to the neglect of the improvement of the mind, and the cultivation of the spiritual and intellectual faculties. This is the spirit in which the teachers and others interest the schools for work, as they have endeavored to get the youth under their care to become sharers in the memorial. With regard to older persons, of course, the same line of argument does not hold: but the Committees have felt that it was very much to be desired that, in this day of devotion to material interests, the country should stop and give a general and universal expression of its reverence for a man whose poems had gained a reputation wherever the English language is spoken: not because he had increased the wealth of the country, but because he had added to its sources of mental growth, and had given expression to the most elevated and spiritual aspirations and hopes. It is in this spirit that it is hoped to con-

tinue the work, and to erect a Memorial which shall not only be worthy of its subject, but shall, in as great a degree as is practicable, give expression to the finer sentiments of the American people. In this view your Committee does not regret that, in its effort to make the Memorial general, by the offer of costly Certificates and Memorial cards to those who gave very small sums, the expenses of raising the required fund have been large. This outlay will bear fruit in the stimulus which has been given to the more elevated feelings of the people.

An important item in the expense of administration, has been the postage on the vast number of circulars, and on the cards and certificates which have been distributed.

The amount of money which the Treasurer reports does not fully represent the fruits of the labors of the Committee during the year, because it is probable that the local associations which have been organized will yet make large additions to the funds of the Society, without adding materially to the expense; and there are other contributions which have not yet been paid, that will very soon come in. The expenses of the Association during the last portion of the year have been materially reduced, so that at present it is organized on an economical basis, and, as there are on hand a large number of circulars and Children's Cards already printed, the future expenses may be expected to be quite small for some time.

The last efforts of the Committees have been ex-

erted to bring about a simultaneous observance of the birthday of Mr. Longfellow, of which, of course, there is little to report to-day, except that the information that a general subscription was proposed for that day was sent to about a thousand different newspapers throughout the country, and very generally printed, with encouraging editorial comment. In a number of cases, Superintendents of Schools, and teachers, sent for further information, and expressed their intention to celebrate the day and make subscriptions to our funds.

The Superintendent of Schools in Washington, in setting apart the 27th of February for the celebration of Mr. Longfellow's birthday, and in offering the children in the schools the opportunity to make contributions to the Memorial Fund, has expressed his views on the subject, which coincide with those of the Committee. He says, "The purpose will be to give the pupils an opportunity to learn something of the life, character, and writings of the good poet. His writings can be made use of in reading, recitation, composition and declamation exercises. The principal events and most noted characteristics of his life can be told by pupils or teachers. His lyrical poems can be sung to familiar tunes. Some of the beautiful and noble sentiments expressed by him in brief poetic form can be displayed as mottoes"; — thus bringing into prominent view the educational influence of our movement.

Among the many educational periodicals which take an interest in the Memorial, is the New England

Journal of Education of Boston, which issued an illustrated broadside description of the movement, and offered to become the channel through which subscriptions might be forwarded to the Association. The Editor engaged in this work from sympathy with the views which have been held, not only by the Committees, but by the Superintendents of Schools in Washington, and elsewhere, regarding the educational influence which it exerts. In order to give point to the celebration of Mr. Longfellow's birthday, the Editor caused an elaborate Memorial Exercise to be prepared, which was published in a late number of the Journal.

In conclusion, we are pleased to report that the heirs of Mr. Longfellow have determined to make to the Association a munificent gift of that portion of the poet's estate which the first movers of the enterprise had been attracted by. The gift will be brought to the attention of the Meeting this evening, and its acceptance will unquestionably assure the success of the enterprise, and enable the Association to raise to the memory of Mr. Longfellow a Memorial such as no American man of letters has ever yet been honored with; which will be alike the pride of Cambridge, and the centre of interest to the thousands, in all parts of the world, who have been moved by the poet's verse.

For the Finance Committee,

ARTHUR GILMAN,

CAMBRIDGE, FEB. 27, 1883.

Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|------------|
| Total Receipts | . | . | . | \$7,578.51 |
| Amount Expended | : | . | . | 2,613.73 |
| Cash in hand | . | . | . | \$4,964.78 |

BOSTON, FEB. 22, 1883.

In addition to the above there is in the hands of agents,—

| | |
|--|---------|
| Cards and Certificates to the value of | \$1,688 |
| And subscriptions made but not paid, | 525 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$2,213 |

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All correspondence should be addressed to The Longfellow Memorial Association, Cambridge, Mass.

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